Scenes from the History of Poststructuralism: Davos, Freiburg, Baltimore, Leipzig

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Several of the most significant recent historical discussions of poststructuralist theorizing are grounded in literary sociology, particularly in its Marxist variants.[1] Shimmering in the moral twilight between elite scholarship and imaginal political activism, they propose to account for the emergence of poststructuralism by thinking the unthought—material, unconscious—conditions of its existence, envisaging a clarification of history that might deliver us from its irrationality and cruelty. Despite their historical dimension, such accounts thus offer a "theory of theory," as they are ultimately grounded in a philosophical act that the theorist performs on himself: the self-clarification of the unconscious determinations that have prevented theoretical reason from obtaining critical insight into reality.[2] Terry Eagleton thus ties the emergence of post-'60s theory (poststructuralism, deconstruction, cultural studies) to a particular feature of late twentieth-century capitalism: namely, its capacity to incorporate culture itself into the mode of economic production through the intensive use of intellectual expertise. In a redolent dialectical formulation, Eagleton then retrieves theory's unthought by arguing that this economic incorporation of culture gives new importance and power to cultural theorists—keeping alive the prospect that late capitalism might yet create the subject capable of seeing through it—while simultaneously ensuring that this promise remains unfulfilled. By imbuing them with a predisposition towards idealism, formalism, and relativism, late capitalism apparently renders theorists incapable of thinking the material and economic conditions of their own activity.[3]

Riffing on similar themes, Fredric Jameson has recently argued that history's dialectical oscillation between thought and its material conditions is not the product of a particular dialectical philosophical culture, as falsely claimed by the present author. Rather it arises from a fundamental and inescapable scission or "permanent gap" between subject and object. This means that the hermeneutic task of thinking the unconscious conditions of thought is one imposed by man's ontological-historical

existence as such, rather than by university courses in Marxist literary theory.[4] The attempt to evade this task by undertaking an empirical history of poststructuralist theorizing without utilizing the hermeneutic key of late capitalism will thus amount to a dereliction of the universal duty to think the unconscious determinations of thought—probably a dereliction brought about by these determinations themselves, in the form of an "anti-intellectualism" that serves a "probusiness agenda."[5] In treating the empirical historiography of poststructuralism as yet another symptom of the failure to think theory's unthought conditions, however, Jameson courts the doctrinaire philosophical preemption of a rival method of historical inquiry. This is especially the case if that historiography proposes to treat the task of thinking theory's unthought conditions as an object of historical inquiry, rather than as an ethical imperative to which everyone living under late capitalism is subject.

There are several books and essay collections dealing more explicitly with the history of structuralism and poststructuralism, from which of course there is much to be learned.[6] Some works nominating themselves as histories of poststructuralism, however, turn out themselves to be exercises in poststructuralism whose commitment to the self-reflexive thematics of fluidity and indeterminacy means that they pose no historical question.[7] Other works do offer an historical narration—for example, of the transposition of German transcendental phenomenology into French theory, or the transposition of French theory into American deconstruction—but in a manner that fails to break free of the self-understanding of their subject.[8] These are works that track the travels of such themes as the indeterminacy of meaning, or the subversion of identity, without inquiring into how meaning is rendered indeterminate or identity subverted; in what cultural and pedagogical contexts such apparently subversive activities might be instituted and valorized; and what cultural purposes or programs might be pursued through such specialized intellectual activities. Finally, there are some studies that have indeed helpfully approached the history of theory in terms of intellectual activities undertaken in particular contexts.[9] These studies though have been hamstrung by their reliance on a philosophical-historical conception of context, understood as the hermeneutic space in which a-temporal ideas are realized or obscured by their material circumstances.[10] It seems to me that this conception has short-circuited investigation into the specific character of the intellectual activities that constitute poststructuralist theorizing, and thence into the kinds of historical context in which these activities have been undertaken.[11]

Let me signal my departure from both social theory and philosophical history by proposing some empirical theses regarding the history

of poststructuralist theory, presented both as hypotheses requiring the support of historical evidence, and as recommendations for the redescription of particular kinds of intellectual activity. Seen from the standpoint of contextual intellectual history, poststructuralist theory can be understood as a development of European university metaphysics, specifically of its most recent form: the metaphysics of transcendental phenomenology elaborated by Edmund Husserl in 1920s Germany and then quickly improvised on by his unfaithful apprentice Martin Heidegger. If this post-Kantian metaphysics is understood as a particular culture of intellectual self-questioning and self-transformation, then we can propose that poststructuralist theory emerged during the 1950s and '60s when this culture of metaphysics was taken up into an array of adjacent intellectual disciplines, undergoing a series of geointellectual translations, in a process of academic assimilation and transmutation that still continues.

For poststructuralist theory to be historically understood as a series of improvisations on the post-Kantian form of European university metaphysics, it requires a historiography that keeps its distance from two rival parties: from the enemies who treat it as "fashionable nonsense," and the friends who regard it as remembering a Being that was forgotten by reason. Such a historiography is confronted by a double task. First, it must provide an account of post-Kantian metaphysics as a particular kind of intellectual activity and academic culture, initially a highly recondite, perhaps even esoteric one, confined to a certain kind of regional philosophy faculty. Then it must outline how this form of metaphysical thought was transmuted into an academic culture capable of being taken up in a variety of paraphilosophical and nonphilosophical disciplines: literary studies, psychoanalysis, political theory, even historiography and jurisprudence. It was from this complex of developments that there emerged the array of exoteric hermeneutic disciplines known generically as poststructuralist theory. Needless to say I will not be attempting a discursive narration of these developments in the present paper. Instead I propose to offer a series of historical snapshots of particular artifacts and scenes. These might be regarded as analogous to crime-scene-investigation photos, from which we can begin to piece together the narrative chain of past events.

I. Two Examples

We can begin by logging two documents of the poststructuralist discourse that we are seeking to redescribe as a particular kind of intel-

lectual activity. These texts—a chapter on Jules Verne from Michel de Certeau's *Heterologies* and Jacques Derrida's "Force of Law" essay—both date from the late 1980s. As American translations of something known in its transatlantic dissemination as "French theory," they document a late stage in a complex chain of intellectual innovations and geointellectual transpositions and receptions. The proximate starting point of this chain is to be found in 1920s German university metaphysics, although we will see that it reaches back well beyond this.

De Certeau's text takes the form of a series of hermeneutic operations performed on Verne's travel writings. At the center of these operations we find a literary version of the Husserlian and Heideggerian doctrine that in attempting to know the world man only succeeds in projecting his own formal preconceptions onto it. The world thus emerges as a simulacrum of the instruments used to know it, leaving a more profound reality, "Being," in obscurity. De Certeau thus characterizes Verne's explorers and cartographers as engaged in a vast scribal concealment of Being through processes of mapping and naming. He presents Verne's account of the colonization of Pacific islands as symbolic of the semantic colonization of Being that takes place through the projection of words and maps:

> Essentially, Verne's explorers are name-givers; they contribute to the world's genesis through nomination. . . . The explorations semanticise the voids of the universe. Their durations, accidents, episodes, and trials metamorphose into words which fill the indefinite expanses of the sea . . . The voyages write the Pacific's great white page: graphs of journeys and words (fragments) from histories traced on maps.[12]

This occlusion of Being, though, is only a prelude to the possibility of its hermeneutic disclosure, the distinctive feature of which is that it is not something that is achieved intentionally, by Verne or by his readers, but happens as if by chance. It is thus through the unexpected breaches or delays in Verne's narrative that the world is glimpsed not in accordance with our projections of it, but as something "other."

De Certeau thus undertakes a reading in which breaks in Verne's narrative are interpreted as symbolic expressions of the rupturing of the semantic colonization of Being, such that the literary-theoretical reading executes a metaphysical task. In this manner, the literary-theoretical reading performs a describable abstractional operation on its source text, annexing the travel narrative to German university metaphysics by renarrating it as a symptomatic or symbolic expression of the ruptural self-disclosure of Being. De Certeau performs this supervening metaphysical operation in order to set the hermeneutic scene for his readers

to relate themselves to Verne's text on this newly elevated cultural level. His reading is thus scene setting for an act of inner philosophical transformation: "The narrative creates stop-off points. . . . There is even, in the heart of the Pacific, a point of delay of tarrying, a paradisiac transgression of work, a pleasure place." At the center of this philosophical metatravel narrative, de Certeau evokes the still space in which Being can be glimpsed, but only in a state of illuminated lassitude, presented as a feminine space outside the reach of thrusting semantic colonization. Engaged in the imaginative ritual of a kind of philosophical metanovel, de Certeau's readers are prepared to participate in this heightened state through which a transformative "other" can enter consciousness, here, perhaps somewhat jarringly, in the form of the indigenous or native: "From there and nowhere else come the native, the *other* introduced into the fellowship of the explorers. Through the native, the reality of the elsewhere causes the voyage to drift, it diverts it, anchoring it in a dreamland. The circle is not perfect. Fiction cuts across it."[13]

In its jurisprudential content Derrida's "Force of Law" essay is far removed from de Certeau's literary-theoretical reading. In the hermeneutic operations that it performs on its object, however, Derrida's discourse remains close to de Certeau's, giving a sense of the transdisciplinary character of poststructuralist theorizing.[14] The basic phenomenological operation remains constant: the occlusion of Being through the formalized projection of knowledge, setting the scene for hermeneutic disclosure. Here though it is organized via the topos of the difference between justice and law. In this setting, law goes proxy for the ossifying effects of a projected formalism, while justice inherits the fluid and incalculable attributes of occluded Being. In Derrida's essay, however, the duality is transformed into an abstractional operation via the traditional philosophical exercise of the antinomy or aporia, that is, the holding of jointly valid but mutually contradictory theses:

> In fact there is only one aporia, only one potential aporetic that infinitely distributes itself. I shall only propose a few examples that will suppose, make explicit or perhaps produce a difficult and unstable distinction between justice and *droit*, between justice (infinite, incalculable, rebellious to rule and foreign to symmetry, heterogeneous and heterotopic) and the exercise of justice as law or right, legitimacy or legality, stabilisable and statutory, calculable, a system of regulated and coded prescriptions.[15]

For Derrida it is the aporetic character of law that opens it to deconstruction: "It is the deconstructible structure of law (*droit*), or if you prefer justice as *droit*, that also insures the possibility of deconstruction."[16] At the same time, though, he also invokes the Husserlian ancestry of this

particular aporetic by referring to it as the *ēpochē*; that is, the exercise that requires the suspension of quotidian forms of judgment in order to allow occluded Being to manifest itself free of all projected concepts and designs. The central aporia or *ēpochē* that Derrida performs is one that he scripts for the relation between "freedom" and "rule." According to this script, in order to be just, judges in courts of law must exercise a freedom in applying the rule or law that amounts in fact to reinventing it; but they must also simultaneously judge in accordance with the rule or law in order to avoid irresponsibility. This allows Derrida to suspend law in a web of mutually contradictory affirmations, of the kind that is correctly seen as a distinguishing discursive feature of the deconstructive variant of poststructuralist theory: "In short, for a decision to be just and responsible, it must, in its proper moment if there is one, be both regulated and without regulation: it must conserve the law and also destroy it or suspend it enough to reinvent it in each case, rejustify it, at least reinvent it in the reaffirmation and the new and free confirmation of its principle."[17]

The resultant fact that justice may only be glimpsed in the act of suspended judgment allows this deconstruction of law to stake a claim to a certain kind of antinomian political radicalism.[18] It means that no actual or "present" legal judgment can be just: "It follows from this paradox that there is never a moment that we can say *in the present* that a decision *is* just . . . or that someone *is* a just man—even less, 'I *am* just.'"[19] Conversely, the only just legal order is one that can never be present—that remains both futural and unpresentable—seen only obliquely and unintentionally, in glimpses of an unnameable event: "Justice remains, is yet, to come, *à venir*, it has an, it is *à-venir*, the very dimension of events irreducibly to come. . . . Justice as the experience of absolute alterity is unpresentable, but it is the chance of the event and the condition of history."[20] If we regard this aporetic exercise as a kind of inner ritual set as a task for Derrida's readers, then it is one designed to allow them to transform their relation to law by treating it as occluding their own access to a justice whose central attribute is that it may never be present to their quotidian selves. Negative theology begets negative jurisprudence.

We might say then that de Certeau's literary poststructuralism operates as a concrete exercise in which the metaphysics of occluded Being and its unforeseeable self-manifestation is operationalized as an inner ritual through the philosophical-hermeneutic reading of a literary text: a text that the reading imbues with the formal order and the unexpected indeterminacy required for this exercise. For its part, Derrida's deconstruction of law takes place through an exercise in which the aporetic

balancing of the incalculability of justice and the certainty of law permits a suspension not just of philosophical judgment but of all "present" legal orders. This opens a space in which a permanently futural justice might unexpectedly disclose itself in the form of an event capable of transforming those who behold it.

So, two documents to work with. How might it be possible then to provide an historical characterization of poststructuralist theorizing that locates it in a historical context without engaging in the hermeneutic reduction that treats it as the intellectual symptom of a hidden historical reality? It is possible to do so, I suggest, by drawing on a form of intellectual history that approaches philosophies in terms of the acts of self-transformation and self-cultivation that they require. This is the approach that informs Pierre Hadot's studies of classical philosophies as "ways of life," that is exploited in Peter Brown's elegant investigations of late-ancient and early-Christian philosophical asceticism, and that Michel Foucault has nominated as the investigation of practices of "spirituality" within philosophy.[21]

Foucault has characterized this philosophical spirituality as "the search, practice, and experience through which the subject carries out necessary transformations on himself in order to have access to the truth," and he locates its ascetic trigger in the doctrine or insistence that the quotidian subject is not qualified for access to higher truth without undertaking such a transformation. The dimension of spirituality that drives certain forms of philosophy can thus be understood in terms of "the set of these researches, practices, and experiences, which may be purifications, ascetic exercises, renunciations, conversions of looking, modifications of existence, etc., which are, not for knowledge but for the subject . . . the price to be paid for access to the truth."[22] By redescribing philosophizing as a particular kind of activity—as a work of the self carried out on the self for the purpose of transforming its mode of acceding to truth—this approach allows us to treat poststructuralist theorizing as a concrete historical reality rather than as an intellectual symptom of one. This in turn enables us to view its context in terms of the circumstances in which the activity is carried out and the cultural movements or institutions that program these circumstances, rather than in terms of the hermeneutic relation between an intellectual symptom and its unconscious material determinations.

Viewed in this light, then, our snapshots of de Certeau and Derrida may be regarded as pictures of particular acts of intellectual self-transformation and self-cultivation. Let us suggest that here we are dealing with a certain kind of "spiritual exercise" in which the exercitant is firstly required to withdraw from quotidian knowledge and value—literary

veridicality, the "present" legal order—thence to enter the state of suspended judgment or illuminated openness. Here it might be possible for a spiritually uncontaminated phenomenon to appear unexpectedly, as the "other," the "event," the *eschaton* that transforms the one who beholds it. This might be regarded as an exercise in the "conversion of looking."

It should be clear that in offering this characterization of poststructuralist theorizing we are not attempting to falsify it. Viewed as a concrete historical activity—that is, seen in the persona of an empirical historian—such theorizing is no more capable of being false than is chess, yoga, or the Eucharist, and, by the same token, no more capable of being true. What we are doing, rather, is seeking to transform the register in which poststructuralism is understood: from that of a theory that might be true or false to that of an irrefragable activity, whose character is open to historical description and whose contextual circumstances are open to historical investigation that might indeed be true or false. Of course this shift results in a dramatic change of outlook, as it means that an intellectual discipline dedicated to disclosing the pristine indeterminacy beneath empirical reality is itself treated as an empirical reality of a particular kind, hence as an object for an empirically oriented intellectual history. I have indicated that the acts of self-transformation and self-cultivation present in poststructuralist theorizing emerge from developments in post-Kantian metaphysics. Now I want to look at three snapshots of these developments, taken at Davos in 1929, Freiburg in 1933, and Baltimore in 1966.

II. Davos 1929

In order to get some sense of what was at stake in the contest between Kantian philosophy and the post-Kantian philosophy of Husserl and Heidegger, we can turn to the debate between Ernst Cassirer and Heidegger that took place in the Swiss alpine spa of Davos on 26 March 1929. This event was attended by two hundred mainly German and French academics and students, and formed part of an "International University Course" sponsored by the Swiss, French, and German governments with a view to improving relations between Francophone and Germanophone academics.[23] Among the academics were Rudolf Carnap, Joachim Ritter, Eugen Fink, and Jean Cavaillès, while the students included a young Emmanuel Levinas and possibly a youngish Herbert Marcuse, both of whom were undertaking spiritual apprenticeships in Heideggerian philosophy. Were this debate to have taken place wholly in the register of

philosophy—as a clash between conflicting interpretations of Kant and thence competing epistemological theories—then it would be difficult to understand either how it could have galvanized and polarized the two hundred spectating minds, or how it could continue to echo in rival academic discipleships today. If, though, we approach the contesting philosophies as informed by rival "spiritualities," or competing ways of qualifying quotidian selves for access to higher truth, then the magnetism of the spectacle starts to becomes graspable. For now the debate appears in the form of a contest between rival spiritual-philosophical exemplars, personified by Cassirer and Heidegger, each modeling the kind of mind into which one should transform oneself in order to accede to the highest kind of truth.

Without going into a level of detail incompatible with our present purposes, it is necessary to sketch the briefest of accounts of what it was about Kant's metaphysics that permitted it to undergo two such opposed receptions.[24] In his militant reaction to both empirical science and existing Protestant university metaphysics, Kant executed an extraordinary dual reshaping of the "rational being" that had long stood at the center of German university metaphysics: that is, man as the harbinger of an intellectual nature, created by the intellection of a divine mind, and hence capable of participating in divine intellection in his diminished creaturely capacity. On the one hand, Kant ascribed to man the possession of a pure apperceptive intelligence from whose synthetic activity the categorial forms of all knowledge emerged and from whose freely self-determining will issued the moral law.[25] On the other hand, in a disturbingly difficult conceit, Kant viewed space and time as this rational being's sensorium or intuitional apparatus.[26] This means that the appearance of objects in space and time might be regarded as the manner in which the pure intellections of man the creative intelligence (*homo noumenon*) are apprehended through the spatial and temporal sensorium of man the subject of passive intuition (*homo phenomenon*).[27]

The interaction between the active intellect and the passive sensorium is handled in Kant's difficult and shifting conception of the transcendental imagination, treated somewhat differently in the first and second editions of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. To this faculty Kant ascribes the capacity of rendering figural, via the "transcendental schematism," the otherwise abstract relations of the transcendental intellect.[28] It is not our purpose to attempt to clarify this conception here, only to note the two different ways in which Kant appears to understand it, and in which it has been understood since. On the one hand, the figurations effected by the transcendental imagination—the transcendental schematisms—can be regarded as products of the synthetic activity of the pure intellect,

as when the shape of a triangle is conceived as the product of a priori rules of construction. On the other hand, the figuration of things can be thought of as the product of the temporal and spatial forms of passive intuition, such that the triangle is only grasped as a shape through the manner in which the "reproductive imagination" synthesizes or associates perceptions in time.

The only reason for dwelling on this unresolved bifurcation in Kant's conception of the transcendental imagination is that it helps to clarify the opposed Kant receptions of Cassirer and Heidegger that were on display at Davos in March 1929. As the leading inheritor of Marburg neo-Kantianism, Cassirer conceived the figuralization of things in space and time as the product of purely formal intellectual relations, in a manner that marginalized independent spatio-temporal intuition. By construing these formal relations as the "symbolic forms" through which man projects an array of objective sciences or cultural meanings, Cassirer sought to dissolve substantial Being into a plurality of relational forms or structures.[29] In this way he modeled the epistemological deportment that would later characterize the moment of structuralist theory in the humanities. It was on this basis that Cassirer distinguished his position from Heidegger's at Davos:

> Being in ancient metaphysics was substance, what forms a ground. Being in the new metaphysics is, in my language, no longer the Being of a substance, but rather the Being which starts from a variety of functional determinations and meanings. And the essential point which distinguishes my position from Heidegger's appears to me to lie here.[30]

The famous difficulty of Heidegger's philosophical repudiation of this neo-Kantian structuralism arises from its gnostic character, that is, from its tying of philosophical truth to the purifying elevation of a rare and privileged subject of truth. In rejecting Cassirer's transcendental-structuralist reception of Kant, Heidegger made use of an esoteric metaphysical doctrine that remained deeply but obscurely present in Kant: namely, the doctrine that time (and space) should be understood as the "pure self-affection" of Being. The core idea in Kant is that our inner empirical intuition of ourselves as temporal beings (*homo phenomenon*) arises because we are "affected by ourselves" as rational beings (*homo noumenon*), which means that our empirical self can never directly know the rational self whose "self-affection" it is.[31] In Heidegger this becomes the doctrine that a pure nontemporal intelligence only becomes aware of itself in the temporal world that it intelligizes but, in doing so, is, as he puts it, "thrown" or ejected into time: what Heidegger calls the "thrownness of

Being."[32] Here this nontemporal intelligence can only appear to itself as one temporal being among others, even though it remains oriented to the dimly remembered transcendent-infinite Being from whence it has fallen into time and consciousness of itself as being here.

It is this conception of human being awakening to itself as a finite being thrown into the temporal world that Heidegger baptized as *Dasein*, or "there-being." And it was this conception that he deployed as a weapon against Cassirer's conception of man as the transcendental font of the forms of experience:

> I believe that what I describe by Dasein does not allow translation into any concept of Cassirer's. . . . What I call Dasein . . . depends on . . . the original unity and the immanent structure of the relatedness of a human being which to a certain extent has been fettered in a body and which, in the fetteredness in the body, stands in a particular condition of being bound up with beings. In the midst of this it finds itself, not in the sense of a spirit which looks down on it, but rather in the sense that Dasein, thrown into the midst of beings, as free, carries out an incursion into being which is always spiritual and, in the ultimate sense, accidental.[33]

In this passage we have a snapshot of Heidegger's reconstruction of the mode of acceding to metaphysical truth and a program for the act of self-transformation required to become the special kind of self capable of acceding to truth of this kind. In repositioning man as a pure intelligence that only comes to oblique awareness of its world-creating intellection through the senses of the temporal body to which it is fettered, Heidegger sought to displace Cassirer's image of man as the transcendental intellect.[34] Against Cassirer, he stipulates that man cannot accede to the truth of Being in the manner of "a spirit which looks down on it," but must do so rather from the viewpoint of the finite being thrown into time yet obliquely aware of the infinite Being from whence it has been thrown. Through this reconstruction of Kantian metaphysical culture, Heidegger sought to transform the mode of acceding to metaphysical truth. For Heidegger, truth is acceded to not through scientific-philosophical recovery of the structural conditions of experience, but only in the form of those accidental glimpses of recessive Being that bestow on man (*Dasein*) the brief but highest moments of his existence: "[It is] so accidental that the highest form of the existence of Dasein is only allowed to lead back to very few and rare glimpses of Dasein's duration between living and death. [It is] so accidental that man exists only in very few glimpses of the pinnacle of his own possibility, but otherwise moves in the midst of his beings."[35]

I want to suggest that in Heidegger's gnostic reconstruction of the mode of acceding to metaphysical truth we can find the intellectual core of poststructuralist theorizing. Heidegger reconstituted truth as something occluded by the formal structures of knowledge, as something to which temporally fettered man can only accede in the accidental disclosures of Being that break through such structures, or appear fitfully in their interstices or at their margins. In doing so he provided the template for an esoteric spiritual exercise that proved capable of exoteric reception in a variety of academic disciplines, two examples of which we have just seen: in de Certeau's literary hermeneutics of occlusion and accidental disclosure and Derrida's deconstructive meditation on an unpresentable justice "to come."

III. Freiburg 1933

At this point, literary sociologists and Marxist theorists would be quite within their disciplinary rights to demand a more socially ramified account of this emergence of poststructuralist theorizing. After all, thus far we have only offered a rough sketch of the transmission of a particular kind of spiritual-philosophical culture; the role of the combative cultivation of exemplary intellectual personae through this culture; and the capacity of this initially esoteric philosophical culture to enter other academic disciplines and produce "theoretical" variants of them. Surely this set of developments must itself have been governed by more deep-seated social and historical transformations, in the structure of society, for example, or the mode of economic or literary production? And surely it is such transformations that will permit us to grasp the hidden significance of the emergence of poststructuralism from the perspective of a historical trajectory whose ultimate destination will show us what poststructuralism really meant? As Jameson complains: "Somehow, for this sociology of ideas, the students being trained in theory are a legitimate part of the object of study, while the larger historical moment [of late capitalism] in which they are themselves formed is not."[36]

We can begin to respond to this quite understandable complaint by observing that while it is indeed necessary to extend investigation of poststructuralism beyond the horizon of formative pedagogies, these nonetheless remain indispensable. This is in part because whatever its utility as an abstract means of characterizing economic relations, "late capitalism" itself forms nobody, as it is not a concept that engages the historical instruments of moral pedagogy or aesthetic self-cultivation. It is also because investigating the historical-social anchorage of poststruc-

turalist cultivation does not involve the revelation of its hidden truth through the thinking of something presently unthought: a "political unconscious," an occluded Being, a repressed Other. Rather it involves the tracing of its multilateral relations to an array of other cultural and political phenomena that are not unconscious but simply underinvestigated.

Were we to discuss the wider dissemination of Heideggerian philosophy in the universities of Nazi Germany—and here we can do little more than gesture towards this—then the object of our concern would not be Heidegger's class position or the manner in which his philosophy's alleged failure to think its own unthought material conditions turned it into the ideological expression of Nazism.[37] Rather our focus would be on the manner in which the extraordinary political polarization of the interwar years, accompanied by extreme ideological polarization and penetration of public authorities and civil associations, impacted on the universities. Here it politicized appointments and examination procedures and induced a prevailing sense of cultural crisis to which philosophy and the *Geisteswissenschaften* felt impelled to respond.[38]

Up until 1933 this led to a highly fluid cultural-political environment in which rival ideological and intellectual factions battled each other on faculty appointment committees and examination boards. If this permitted Heidegger to wage his associated campaigns against neo-Kantians and "liberals" through influence peddling and highly tendentious referee reports, then the social democrats and neo-Kantians supported their candidates via the same means.[39] Even after 1933 the highly factionalized and "polycratic" character of the Nazi regime meant that there was no single delineation of a Nazi philosophy to which Heidegger might have claimed the mantle. At the same time, from 1933 onwards a series of politically and racially discriminatory citizenship laws allowed for the purging of socialists, liberals, and Jews from the universities, resulting inter alia in Cassirer's dismissal from Hamburg as a "non-Aryan" (rather than as a neo-Kantian).[40] What is striking in this situation is the manner in which an array of philosophical positions bearing the theological imprint of German metaphysics—neo-Kantianism, transcendental phenomenology, existentialism, Heideggerianism—moved beyond their technical concerns in order to diagnose a spiritual crisis of the age to which they offered rival solutions, often in the form of "political religions" that could be adopted by the party war machines.[41] It was this philosophical transmutation of Germany's political crisis into a universal spiritual crisis that informed the competing philosophical spiritualities presented by Cassirer and Heidegger at Davos, and that Heidegger could advance in the 1930s when the consolidation of Nazi rule in the universities presented him with an increasingly clear field.

Four years after Davos, then, on 27 May 1933, Heidegger could use his inaugural lecture as *Rektor-Führer* of Freiburg University to show how his otherwise esoteric philosophy could be used to tie the spiritual transformation of the nation's university students to the spiritual awakening of the German people promised by Nazism. In a direct transposition of his new regime of truth onto the academic hierarchy of the university, Heidegger told the Freiburg students that the questioning of Being or *ēpochē* is not that which finds an answer in the positive sciences, but is an attunement to the self-disclosure of Being that dissolves all such "ontic" sciences into a "fundamental ontology": "Such questioning shatters the division of the sciences into rigidly separated specialties, carries them back from their endless and aimless dispersal into isolated fields and corners, and exposes science once again to the fertility and the blessing bestowed by all the world-shaping powers of human-historical being (*Dasein*)." If the academic body wills the "essence of science" in this sense, then it will "create for our people its world . . . that is, its truly *spiritual* world. For 'spirit' is . . . primordially attuned, knowing resoluteness toward the essence of Being."[42] Heidegger had already characterized this breaching of the positive sciences in pursuit of Being as "theoretical"—thereby establishing the meaning of "theory" later found in the American humanities graduate school—and, significantly, identified this as a "comportment": "Theoretical comportment is a process first because it flows through a chain of grounding, but second because it tears itself from the contexture of life with ever novel spontaneity."[43]

As Heidegger made clear, the immediate context for his inaugural exhortation was the Nazi *neue Studentenrecht* (new Student Law) that had been proclaimed a few weeks earlier on May 1.[44] In envisaging a political mobilization of the student body in the service of national spiritual renewal, this law provided Heidegger with the opportunity to advance his own program of spiritual transformation oriented to forming the theoretical comportment: "The *third* bond of the student body binds it to the spiritual mission of the German people. This people shapes its fate by placing its history into the openness of the overwhelming power of all the world-shaping powers of the human being (*Dasein*) and by ever renewing the battle for its spiritual world."[45] Heideggerian philosophy was thus not joined to Nazism by a law-like historical dialectic that has moved us beyond such a nexus through the progressive clarification of the "political unconscious" on which it was supposedly based. Rather, this linkage was forged in an unpredictable and uncertain cultural-political program designed to integrate a crucial feature of Heidegger's philosophical culture—its capacity to mobilize students around self-transformational striving to achieve the theoretical comportment—with

the larger program of political mobilization entailed by the Nazi reforms of the university.

When in the 1960s, in the context of a different student movement, Marcuse's Heideggerian Marxism was deployed as a mobilizing philosophy, this too assumed the form of the contingent articulation of an exemplary culture of spiritual self-transformation to a particular program of political mobilization.[46] Of course the changed geopolitical and geointellectual circumstances in which this took place—the fact that now the theoretical comportment was attached to the mobilizational politics of American antistate university activists (the "New Left") rather than the mobilizational politics of the Nazi party-state—meant that "theory" assumed a quite different cultural-political significance and valency. Nonetheless, no less than Heidegger's, Marcuse's "theory" emerged from the combination of academic-spiritual self-cultivation and factional political mobilization. As such, it owed its American flourishing not to its greater success in thinking an unthought that had eluded Heidegger, but to something else altogether: namely, the military defeat of the Nazi's *Tausendjähriges Reich* by the American and Soviet empires. It was this pure contingency of history that had permitted Marcuse to transpose Heidegger's self-transformative philosophical culture into the new geopolitical and geointellectual circumstances represented by the elite American graduate school. In short, while we can agree that our sketch of the history of poststructuralist theory requires a far more ramified account of its social and political anchorage than we have yet provided, such an account will lead not to a thinking of theory's unthought material conditions, but to something else entirely: an investigation of theory's various emergences from the contingent transposition of its culture of spiritual self-transformation into unforeseen cultural and political contexts with unpredictable consequences.

IV. Baltimore 1966

In turning to our third snapshot of the emergence of poststructuralist theory—taken from the symposium on "The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man" held at the Johns Hopkins University from 18–21 October 1966—we are struck by its differences from the Davos symposium, but also by its similarities to the earlier event. Davos represented the government-sponsored gathering of a European intellectual elite, convened on neutral ground between the wars, to facilitate exchanges between the academic cultures of neighboring hostile powers, Germany and France. The Hopkins symposium formed a quite different intellec-

tual-historical context: namely, the utilization of a culturally powerful elite American university as a reception- and dissemination-context for French theory of the 1960s. At the same time, though, if we view it from the perspective of the paper that would become its talismanic centerpiece—Derrida's "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences"—then the Hopkins symposium displays an uncanny similarity to the Davos event. For not only did Derrida repeat Heidegger's proclamation of the eclipse of neo-Kantian structuralism, but he did so in the form of a "debate" with the absent doyen of French structuralism, Claude Lévi-Strauss, using a metaphysics that was almost wholly Heideggerian. If poststructuralist theory can be historically understood in terms of the assimilation of post-Kantian metaphysics into French theory, and thence its reception in the elite United States humanities academy, then the presentation of Derrida's "Structure, Sign and Play" paper to the Hopkins symposium offers us an important snapshot of this transpositional context.

One of the striking features of Derrida's characterization of the intellectual transformation that he was announcing is his treatment of it as an unexpected "event." Derrida portrayed this event as signifying the eclipse of the "metaphysics of presence" that is supposedly still embedded in structuralism, and as disclosing a truth only capable of being glimpsed fitfully in an unnameable birth:

> Here there is a sort of question . . . of which we are only glimpsing today the *conception, the formation, the gestation, the labor*. I employ these words with a glance toward those who turn their eyes away in the face of the as yet unnameable which is proclaiming itself . . . only under the species of the non-species, in the formless, mute, infant, and terrifying form of monstrosity.[47]

If this formulation echoes Heidegger's template remark—that "the highest form of the existence of Dasein is only allowed to lead back to very few and rare glimpses of Dasein's duration between living and death"—then that is no accident. Derrida's framing of the paper and all of the hermeneutic operations performed within it are virtuoso instantiations of Heidegger's post-Kantian mode of acceding to metaphysical truth. This we recall is the mode in which the philosopher looks on himself as thrown into historical time through the "self-affection" of a recessive Being that can thus never be "present" in temporal experience; except, that is, for the fitful glimpses of the "unnameable," disclosed to someone at the pinnacle of man's possibility. By presenting his paper as a naming of unnameable Being, Derrida was thus offering a public performance of the exemplary act of Heideggerian spiritual self-transformation. This

allowed Derrida himself to appear before his American audience as the higher self who has been touched by renovatory Being—echoing Heidegger's self-presentation at Davos—and thereby qualified to lead others to intellectual renewal.

Historicized in this manner, the Hopkins presentation of "Structure, Sign and Play" will not appear as a crucial illuminative "event" that revolutionized Western intellectual history: that is, the ruptural event by which the structuralist "metaphysics of presence" was shattered through Derrida's rare glimpse into an unnameable recessive Being.[48] Rather, the delivery of this paper will be approached as a contingent historical event in which a regional mode of acceding to truth, improvised within the spiritual culture of post-Kantian European university metaphysics, was modeled for an elite audience of American humanities intellectuals, who were addressed as potential initiates and disseminators. It is via this contextualization that we can arrive at an historical understanding of the intellectual operations performed within the paper itself.

The central feature of the paper in this regard is its extensive use of the aporia or antinomy as the means of executing the *ēpochē* or skeptical suspension of positive knowledge that lies at the heart of this exercise. In "Structure, Sign and Play" Derrida engages in the aporia in order to perform the suspension of positive knowledges and the destruction of the "metaphysics of presence"—Heidegger's "clearing of the ground." The object of this exercise is ethical and existential before it is epistemic: the philosopher's inducement in himself of the state of floating attunement to unnameable Being whose fleeting self-disclosure promises radical self-transformation. Derrida's central aporia is performed on the neo-Kantian conception of structure itself, elaborating a discourse that situates it at the nexus of mutually contradictory imperatives. Derrida stipulates that, on the one hand, the role of the principle of "structurality" is to determine the play of possibilities in a totality for which the structure constitutes a center that is not part of this play. At the same time he declares, on the other hand, that to maintain its role, the structuring center may not itself be subject to the "principle of structurality" or determination that defines the totality. This then gives rise to Derrida's central aporia or paradox, that the structure or center is both within the totality yet outside it: "The centre is at the centre of the totality, and yet, since the centre does not belong to the totality . . . the totality *has its centre elsewhere*. The centre is not the centre."[49]

Once structuralism has been incorporated into this aporetic exercise then its claims to scientific knowledge can be suspended via the paradox to which they have been made to lead. This allows Derrida to interpose that it is not knowledge that lies at the base of structuralism but desire,

specifically the desire to escape the "anxiety" arising from the fact that Being eludes all attempts at its structural determination. In this way, following Heidegger, Derrida can nominate "metaphysics" as the attempt to allay the anxiety arising from the absence of Being by declaring it to be present, for example, as "essence, existence, substance, subject."[50] All of these have been used to anchor the center of structure in a present origin or telos—a "transcendental signified"—yet each only expresses the desire to quell the anxiety arising from its absence. If, though, as our redescription suggests, anxiety over inaccessible Being is a product of the aporetic spiritual exercise designed to induce it in the philosopher, then Derrida's critique of structuralism as "metaphysics" should be understood as the elaboration of a rival philosophical spirituality that is itself grounded in Heideggerian metaphysics.

The intellectual "event" or "rupture" that Derrida announces to his audience is thus one that takes place through the performance of the antinomy that suspends (neo-Kantian) structural determination in the paradox of "the centre is not the centre." It is through this performance that Derrida can identify this event with the application of the principle of structurality to structure itself, and thence with the admittance of language or discourse into the structural sciences, as now structure itself can be declared to be subject to the "play" of meaning. In this setting, discourse will be understood in terms of the ceaseless detour or *différance* of meaning in relation to a permanently inaccessible Being or "transcendental signified," to which it nonetheless remains oriented: "This moment was . . . that in which, in the absence of a centre or origin, everything became discourse . . . that is to say, when everything became a system where the central signified, the original transcendental signified, is never absolutely present outside a system of differences."[51] In other words, at Hopkins "discourse" was introduced into the human sciences in accordance with the spiritual exercise required by the culture of Heideggerian metaphysics.

Seen from an historical perspective, then, Derrida's Hopkins paper can be understood as a snapshot of a dual regional transposition of post-Kantian European university metaphysics. It represented the transatlantic geointellectual transposition of a metaphysical culture that had previously been regionally "continental" European, owing to the fact that—unlike the German—the English and American early-modern religious settlements had been largely hostile to metaphysics.[52] At the same time it represented a discursive transposition of the explicitly metaphysical arguments in which Cassirer and Heidegger engaged at Davos into a much broader literary-theoretical hermeneutic register, of the kind that we have noted in de Certeau. As the instrument and effect

of this transposition, a certain kind of "literary theory" would thus be enabled to act as a vehicle for the exercise in Heideggerian metaphysical self-transformation, with the result that "continental philosophy" would enter the United States humanities academy—thence the British and Australian—initially through the beachheads provided by literature and language departments.

In fact this discursive transposition had already been anticipated by Heidegger at Davos in his comment that "art itself has a metaphysical sense."[53] The more Heidegger focused on metaphysics as an exercise through which initiates could learn to attune themselves to unplannable glimpses of incalculable Being, the less dependent this became on specifically philosophical terminology and argumentation. Heidegger's own postwar transposition of his metaphysics into a literary hermeneutics—facilitated by the translation of his recondite philosophical vocabulary into accessible literary metaphors—was mirrored in the work of French literary phenomenologists, making it possible for the esoteric metaphysics to appear in the exoteric form of literary hermeneutics. Derrida's Hopkins paper sits on the cusp of this transition. In its metaphorical philosophico-literary vocabulary—in its discourse of decentered structures and of meaning detoured from the "transcendental signified" through the aporetic structure of discourse—it could look backwards to Derrida's own demanding philosophical discussion of Husserl's phenomenology, yet forwards to a kind of literary criticism, deconstruction, that could be taught to undergraduates as a hermeneutic routine.

Regardless of the exoteric dissemination to come, however, poststructuralist theory would not lose its enclave character. It would continue to accede to truth in the form of chance glimpses of a recessive Being obtained through the suspension of positive knowledges, in the form of the event, the other, an indefinitely deferred literary meaning, a permanently deferred "justice to come," and so on. This means that access to these rarely glimpsed truths would remain restricted to those who engage in the exercise of suspension in order to attune a self that accedes to truth in the form of rare glimpses. The literary poststructuralism that surfaced at Johns Hopkins in 1966 was thus an historical avatar of that philosophical spirituality that had sought to outflank neo-Kantian structuralism at Davos in 1929 and to suspend the positive sciences at Freiburg in 1933, bearing within it an act of spiritual self-transformation projected as a crisis of knowledge and culture. In viewing positive knowledges as veils thrown over the lacunae revealed by their own aporia, American literary poststructuralism would continue to accuse the exponents of such knowledges of evading the "anxiety" of the absence of Being—"those who turn their eyes away in the face of the

as yet unnameable which is proclaiming itself"—and hence of failing to reach the point where "man exists only in very few glimpses of the pinnacle of his own possibility."

Coda: Leipzig 1665

We clearly owe some kind of answer to those who will demand a justification for the kind of history we have sketched—that is, a justification beyond the empirical adequacy and plausibility claimed by our redescription and contextualization of poststructuralist theorizing. The justification towards which we can gesture in the space remaining, though, is not one that will satisfy those for whom all accounts of theory must themselves take place as a thinking of their own unthought conditions, thus as a self-reflexive "theory of theory." Rather then offering a theory of theory, this paper has sketched a historiography in which the poststructuralist suspension of empirical knowledge is itself treated as an object of empirical knowledge.[54] Drawing on the work of Peter Brown, Pierre Hadot, and (late) Michel Foucault, we have adumbrated an empirically oriented intellectual history that treats this suspension or *ēpochē* as a concrete historical activity: in fact as one of the exercises in self-transformation carried out through such techniques as the aporia and aimed at forming an illuminated way of acceding to truth. The history of the performance and transmission of such activities is one that is entered on by treating events in time as forming a self-sufficient temporal order, independent of transcendental conditions or structuring. Such a history is regarded as free of hidden meanings or unconscious determinations, and hence as the object not of a hermeneutic historiography but of a narrative one that attempts to track empirical relations between various kinds of activities, events, and contexts.

This is not to presume, however, that this kind of empirical historiography is itself without conditions or is grounded in some kind of self-presenting historical reality. To enter this historical world Western Europeans first had to learn how to treat events and activities as untranscendable temporal objects of a narrative historiography. In fact, this historiography arose not from the incontestable discovery of an empirical past, but from a combative intellectual movement that campaigned to adopt an empirical disposition or "stance" towards the past.[55] Empirical historiography thus also required a transformation in the mode of acceding to truth and in the persona of the historian. This transformation took place at the level of theological, political, and academic contestation, in which different forms of historiography were developed as instruments of

diverging intellectual cultures and as weapons of cultural-political combat.[56] In other words, the justification for our account of poststructuralist theorizing is not to be looked for in a theory of theory aspiring to an intellectual reflexivity that might exempt it from historical partiality. It is to be found, rather, in a history of historiography that acknowledges the cultural and political partiality embedded in the methodological form of "contextual" historiography itself.

We can provide a brief pointer to the history of this style of historiography by looking at a work published by the Lutheran historian of philosophy Jakob Thomasius—the *Schediasma Historicum*—published in Leipzig in 1665. In this work, Thomasius cultivated an empirical stance towards the history of philosophy and theology by combining the latest contextualizing techniques of critical-humanist philology with a pugnaciously antimetaphysical Protestant pietism.[57] It was on this basis that he was able to treat a wide array of pagan metaphysics, scholastic theologies, and modern philosophies as purely temporal activities to be understood contextually, in terms of the circumstances of their composition and their effects.[58] His specific focus was on the context in which Greek metaphysics had been combined with Christian doctrine, initially by the Church Fathers, and then by the scholastics who followed them, with disastrous consequences for "simple Christian faith."[59] Philosophy and theology were thus to be understood not in terms of their metaphysical truth or falsity—as that only led to irresolvable sectarian conflicts—but as activities occurring in profane historical time: in fact, as the teaching activities of the pagan philosophical schools and the Christian scholastic universities. It was in this way that Thomasius produced one of the earliest historical contextualizations of philosophy.

By treating it as the historical product of the merging of Christian doctrine with dualist Greek metaphysics in the scholastic university, Thomasius could transpose the bulk of Christian theology into this new profane historical space. He viewed theology historically in terms of the Christian reception of pagan metaphysical dualisms from which arose an array of reconciliatory monistic and pantheistic "heresies."[60] In the case of Christian neo-Platonism, for example, Thomasius argued that through its emanationism—according to which man emerges as an intellectual being from the continuous intellection of the divine mind—this doctrine establishes a false continuum between creature and creator.[61] In another striking move, Thomasius argued that through this false continuum, Christian neo-Platonism had given rise to a heterodox practice of self-sanctification. This took shape in the form of practices of self-purification through which the adept strove to shed their material selves and rise to meet the pure intellect from which they had devolved, thereby dispensing

with the mediation of Christ and the church.[62] In treating this practice as the source of an "enthusiast" comportment in which philosophical adepts strove for union with God, Thomasius may be regarded as offering an early example of the historiographic redescription of philosophy in terms of self-transformative spiritual exercises.

We have already encountered what appear to be quasi-emanationist doctrines in the preceding discussion. Kant's dualistic metaphysics—according to which empirical man (*homo phenomenon*) is the form in which a self-affecting pure intelligence (*homo noumenon*) appears to its passive self—would seem to be a development from early modern neo-Platonism.[63] In viewing man as thrown into a temporal world of beings that affords him only fitful (yet transformative) glimpses of the Being from whence he has been thrown, Heidegger's metaphysics would appear to be another such development.[64] Will it prove a feasible avenue for historical inquiry to approach poststructuralist theorizing as the most recent development of this metaphysical culture, whose central role is to program a self-transformative exercise in acceding to illuministic truth?

Already in the generation of historians of philosophy that followed Jakob Thomasius in the 1690s—Daniel Colberg, Gottfried Arnold, and Christian Thomasius—the notion that the philosophical theologies were heresies had dropped from sight, in keeping with the transformation of heresy into a purely historical concept through which the orthodox had stigmatized the heterodox. This was even more pronounced in the generation of historians that followed them, which included Isaac de Beausobre and Johann Mosheim, and would lead on to Gibbon and Hume and ultimately, perhaps, to the Cambridge School. This change was not least due to the fact that the more deeply these historians embedded philosophical theologies (and theological philosophies) in a purely immanent history of their teaching in churches, universities, and sects, the less pertinent became the question of their truth or falsity.[65] What did remain pertinent, though, was the redescription of them as intellectual practices giving rise to characteristic kinds of spiritual comportment, which were increasingly viewed in terms of their suitability for particular conceptions of postconfessional civil life. Will it prove to be the case that the kind of contextualist intellectual history from which this paper has drawn its snapshots of poststructuralist theorizing is a late development of this profane antimetaphysical historiography of philosophy? Considering the horizons opened by these possibilities it is appropriate to close our discussion with these questions rather than their answers.

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NOTES

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2 On this threshold between philosophy and historiography, see J. G. A. Pocock, "Quentin Skinner: The History of Politics and the Politics of History," *Common Knowledge* 10 (2004): 532–33.

3 Terry Eagleton, *After Theory* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), 24–30, 44–49, 95–102.

4 Fredric Jameson, "How Not to Historicize Theory," *Critical Inquiry* 34 (2008): 574–75.

5 Jameson, "How Not to Historicize Theory," 569.

6 For the author's own initial contribution to this historiography, see Ian Hunter, "The History of Theory," *Critical Inquiry* 33 (2006): 78–112. This paper elicited Jameson's rebuke in his "How Not to Historicize Theory," which in turn led to my unchastened response: Ian Hunter, "Talking about My Generation," *Critical Inquiry* 34 (2008): 583–600.

7 For examples, see the essays collected in Tilottama Rajan and Michael J. O'Driscoll, eds., *After Postructuralism: Writing the Intellectual History of Theory* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 2002).

8 François Dosse, *History of Structuralism*, vol. 1, *The Rising Sign, 1945–1966*, trans. Deborah Glassman (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1997); François Cusset, *French Theory: How Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, and Co. Transformed the Intellectual Life of the United States*, trans. Jeff Fort (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2008); Tilottama Rajan, "In the Wake of Cultural Studies: Globalisation, Theory, and the University," *Diacritics* 31 (2001): 67–88.

9 See several of the essays in Mark Bevir, Jill Hargis, and Sara Rushing, eds., *Histories of Postmodernism* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

10 To the extent that it may be regarded as an account of the immediate prehistory of postructuralism, then Stefanos Geroulanos's illuminating study of the reception of Heideggerian thought in pre- and postwar France also remains mortaged to this philosophical-historical conception of context. Geroulanos treats the intellectual combat between rival French academic factions as if it were governed by the truth or falsity of Heideggerian thought. See Stefanos Geroulanos, *An Atheism That Is not Humanist Emerges in French Thought* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2010), 49–99.

11 For more, see Ian Hunter, "Postmodernist Histories," *Intellectual History Review* 19 (2009): 265–79.

12 Michel de Certeau, *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1986), 143.

13 De Certeau, *Heterologies*, 148.

14 For a more detailed discussion, see Ian Hunter, "The Desire for Deconstruction: Derrida's Metaphysics of Law," *Communication, Politics and Culture* 41 (2008): 6–29.

15 Jacques Derrida, "Force of Law: The 'Mystical Foundations of Authority,'" in *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice*, ed. Drucilla Cornell, Michel Rosenfeld, and David Gray Carslon (New York: Routledge, 1992), 22.

16 Derrida, "Force of Law," 14–15.

17 Derrida, "Force of Law," 23.

18 For a deconstructionist defense of this claim, see Paul Patton, "Derrida's Engagement with Political Philosophy," in Bevir, Hargis, and Rushing, eds., *Histories of Postmodernism*, 149–70.

19 Derrida, "Force of Law," 23.
20 Derrida, "Force of Law," 27.
21 Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, trans. Michael Chase (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995). Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1988); Peter Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1992); and Peter Brown, *Authority and the Sacred: Aspects of the Christianisation of the Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995). Michel Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the College de France 1981–1982*, ed. Frédéric Gros, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2006).
22 Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 15.
23 For a helpful overview, see Peter Eli Gordon, "Continental Divide: Ernst Cassirer and Martin Heidegger at Davos, 1929—An Allegory of Intellectual History," *Modern Intellectual History* 1 (2004): 219–48; and for an informative collection of essays, see Dominic Kaegi and Enno Rudolph, eds., *Cassirer—Heidegger: 70 Jarhe Davoser Debatte* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 2002). On the event as symptomatic of the separation of continental from analytic philosophy, see Michael Friedman, *A Parting of the Ways: Carnap, Cassirer, and Heidegger* (Chicago: Open Court, 2000), 1–9.
24 For a different but parallel discussion of this, see Friedman, *A Parting of the Ways*, 25–37.
25 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1996), B 132-B 136.
26 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 37-B 53.
27 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 150-B 156.
28 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 176-B 187.
29 For more, see Gregory B. Moynahan, "Hermann Cohen's *Das Prinzip der Infinitesimalmethode*, Ernst Cassirer, and the Politics of Science in Wilhelmine Germany," *Perspectives on Science* 11 (2003): 35–75.
30 Ernst Cassirer, in Ernst Cassirer and Martin Heidegger, "Davos Disputation between Ernst Cassirer and Martin Heidegger," in *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, ed. and trans. Richard Taft (Indianapolis: Indiana Univ. Press, 1997), 206.
31 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 67–B 69, B 156. For relevant discussions, see James Mensch, "Temporalization as a Trace of the Subject," in *Kant und die Berliner Aufklärung. Akten des IX. Internationalen Kant-Kongresses* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2001), 409–17; and Claudia Jáuregui, "Auto-affection and Synthesis of Reproduction," *Kant-Studien*, 97 (2006): 369–81.
32 Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 170–73.
33 Heidegger, "Davos Disputation," 203.
34 For an illuminating discussion of Heidegger's self-conscious rejection of Kantian transcendentalism viewed in terms of the ongoing conflict between Augustinian and Pelagian forms of Christian metaphysical anthropology, see Samuel Moyn and Azzan Yadin, "The Creaturely Limits of Knowledge: Martin Heidegger, Immanuel Kant, and Weimar Theological Pessimism," forthcoming.
35 Heidegger, "Davos Disputation," 203.
36 Jameson, "How Not to Historicize Theory," 572.
37 For different versions of this approach, see Theodor W. Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity*, trans. Knut Tarnowski and Frederic Will (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973); and Pierre Bourdieu, *The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger*, trans. Peter Collier (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1991).
38 Here, without attempting to do justice to its scope and detail, I draw on the remarkable archival history of Christian Tilitzki, *Die deutsche Universitätsphilosophie in der Weimarer Republik und im Dritten Reich* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2002).

39 See, for example, Tilitzki's account of Heidegger's unsuccessful attempt to block the appointment of the social democrat Siegfried Marck to the chair in philosophy at Breslau (Wroclaw) in 1930. *Die deutsche Universitätsphilosophie*, 290–94. Marck had made the mistake of criticizing *Being and Time*, but had strong support within the Social Democratic Party (SPD).

40 *Die deutsche Universitätsphilosophie*, 599–604.

41 *Die deutsche Universitätsphilosophie*, 916–34, 1166–68.

42 Martin Heidegger, "The Self-Assertion of the German University," *Review of Metaphysics* 38 (1985): 474.

43 Martin Heidegger, *Towards the Definition of Philosophy*, trans. Ted Sadler (London: Athlones, 2000), 179.

44 Heidegger, "The Self-Assertion of the German University," 475.

45 Heidegger, "The Self-Assertion of the German University," 476.

46 For Herbert Marcuse's "Heideggerian Marxism," see Andrew Feenberg, *Heidegger and Marcuse: The Catastrophe and Redemption of History* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

47 Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," in *The Structuralist Controversy: The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man*, ed. Richard Macksey and Eugenio Donatio (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1972), 265.

48 For examples of this reading of the "event" in its own deconstructionist terms, see the symposium papers in the special issue of the electronic journal *Theory and Event* dedicated to the fortieth anniversary of the occasion. We thus find the editors incautiously claiming that: "Looking back after more than forty years one can plausibly argue that Derrida's presentation at the Baltimore symposium constitutes the kind of *event* that he refers to cautiously in his reading of 'the history of the concept of structure' in the opening lines of that paper." Ryan Bishop and John W. P. Phillips, "40 Years of Structure, Sign and Play," *Theory & Event* 12 (2009), para 6 (DOI: 10.1353/tae.0.0055).

49 Derrida, "Structure, Sign and Play," 248.

50 Derrida, "Structure, Sign and Play," 249.

51 Derrida, "Structure, Sign and Play," 249.

52 For some of the relevant background, see J. G. A. Pocock, "Religious Freedom and the Desacralisation of Politics: From the English Civil Wars to the Virginia Statute," in *The Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom: Its Evolution and Consequences in American History*, ed. Merrill D. Peterson and Robert C. Vaughan (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1988), 43–73. See also Ian Hunter, *Rival Enlightenments: Civil and Metaphysical Philosophy in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2001).

53 Heidegger, "Davos Disputation," 204.

54 On treating philosophical abstraction as an object of historical inquiry, see J. G. A. Pocock, "The History of Political Thought: A Methodological Inquiry (1962)," in *Political Thought and History: Essays on Theory and Method* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2009), 3–19.

55 On the empirical outlook as a cultivated intellectual deportment or "stance," see Bas C. van Fraassen, *The Empirical Stance* (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press, 2002).

56 For more on the emergence of this antimetaphysical historiographic culture in the aftermath of the religious wars, see the revealing studies by Donald R. Kelley, *The Descent of Ideas: The History of Intellectual History* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002); Martin Mulsow, *Moderne aus dem Untergrund: Radikale Frühaufklärung in Deutschland 1680–1720* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 2002); J. G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, vol. 2, *Narratives of Civil Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999); and Sicco Lehmann-Brauns, *Weisheit in der Weltgeschichte: Philosophiegeschichte zwischen Barok und Aufklärung* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2004).

57 See the illuminating discussion in Ralph Häfner, "Jacob Thomasius und die Geschichte der Häresien," in *Christian Thomasius (1655–1728): Neue Forschungen im Kontext der Früh-*

aufklärung, ed. Friedrich Vollhardt (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1997), 141–64.
58 For more, see the invaluable discussion in Lehmann-Brauns, *Weisheit in der Weltgeschichte*, 21–111.
59 Jacob Thomasius, *Schediasma historicum* (Leipzig, 1665), § 19.
60 Thomasius, *Schediasma historicum*, § 37.
61 Thomasius, *Schediasma historicum*, § 52.
62 Thomasius, *Schediasma historicum*, § 53.
63 As argued in the important but neglected study by Philip Merlan, *Monopsychism, Mysticism, Metaconsciousness: Problems of the Soul in the Neoaristotelian and Neoplatonic Tradition* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963).
64 See Merlan's comments on Husserl's transcendental reduction in this regard, in Merlan, *Monopsychism*, 132–35.
65 See the discussion of truth in Quentin Skinner, "Interpretation, Rationality and Truth," in *Visions of Politics*, vol. 1, *Regarding Method* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002), 27–56.